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THE JEWS IN THE WORKS OF THE CHURCH FATHERS.

VI.

JEROME,

THE Latin Father's comprehensive works contain a mass of data concerning the Palestinian Jews, as well as complete accounts of their political, educational, and religious status in the fourth century, which have as yet by no means been exhausted. The following pages give especial prominence to those points which, as far as my view of the literature of the subject extends, have not received adequate treatment. These are, however, so numerous that I have thought it well, for the sake of clearness and conciseness, to divide the subject into sections.

1.—POLITICAL POSITION OF THE JEWS IN PALESTINE DURING THE FOURTH CENTURY.

The Jews seem to have enjoyed the full right of domicile in Palestine and adjacent countries. We find them settled in all parts of the country. Considerable tracts were almost exclusively occupied by them,¹ while Chris-

¹ On. Sacr., ed. Lagarde, cxix. 15, 19; cxx. 6; cxli. 27; elvii. 4, etc.

tianity was only spread over that territory which was formerly called Moab.¹ In Judea itself the Christians were only here and there sole occupiers of entire localities.² While, however, the Jews were not forbidden by express law to settle in towns and trade centres, they seem of their own accord to have avoided large cities, where their appearance might have occasioned a tumult.³ For the same reason they abstained from attending crowded markets⁴—so permanent and abiding was the effect of the terrible disasters which they had sustained in their last struggle with the Romans. Under Abraham's terebinth tree, where, as the story ran, thousands of Jewish captives of war had been sold into slavery in the reign of terror that followed the revolt against Hadrian, fairs were held annually and largely frequented.⁵ Could the Jews help avoiding a place fraught with such sad memories? For other reasons, too, the commercial cities of the Holy Land were an abomination to the Hebrews. A Talmudic law forbade Jews from entering Ascalon, Gaza, Acco, and Scythopolis, because of their still prevalent idolatry (T. B. *Abodah Zara*, 11*b*). Cæsarea and Joppa and other towns practised the most shameful rites of heathendom as late as the fifth century.⁶ We need not, therefore, wonder that Jerome was impressed by the small number of Jews who visited those cities.

Settlement in Jerusalem, on the other hand, was forbidden by an express enactment, which we learn from Jerome was still in force in the fourth century.⁷ They

¹ In Is. xvi. 4, In omni terra Moab ecclesia Christi.

² On. Sacr. xciii. 18; xiv. 15; cviii. 27.

³ In *Ep. ad Galat.* iv. 22, Vix rarus atque notabilis in urbibus Judaeus appareat.

⁴ In Jerem. xxxi. 14, Idcirco execrabile esse Judaeis mercatum celeberrimum visere.

⁵ In Zach. xi. 5, In tabernaculo Abraae . . . ubi nunc per annos . . . mercatus celeberrimus exercetur.

⁶ Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud*, pp. 68, 232; Schürer, *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, II, p. 11.

⁷ In Soph. i. 15, et passim.

were hardly permitted to wail on Zion's ruins. This was a privilege which had to be heavily paid for. Jerome dwells with satisfaction on this humiliation.¹ Every year, on the 9th of Ab, wailing and with rent garments, the Jews could be seen traversing the Temple mount, and throwing themselves upon stones pierced with a hole and daubed with oil.² They donned mourners' robes, walked barefoot, and rolled themselves in the dust. Even the dish of lentils, usually prepared for those bereaved by death, was not wanting.³

In trade and commerce no restrictions seem to have been placed on the Jews. Jewish physicians and innkeepers are mentioned by name in Jerome's works. The former were on friendly terms with the scholars;⁴ the latter were accused of mingling their wine with water.⁵ State offices were barred to the Jews; so was the military profession. "No wonder," says our author, with malicious satisfaction, "that the Jews have lost their manly bearing. They are not received into the army, nor are they permitted to wear swords or bear other warlike arms."⁶

2.—SOCIAL POSITION OF THE JEWS.

The material condition of the Palestinian Jews must, on the whole, be pronounced favourable. They appear to have been rather rich than poor. Jerome accentuates every species of misery they suffer as proofs that they are no longer God's people; but he has nothing to say of their poverty. On the contrary, it is their wealth which

¹ In Soph. Compare Eusebius' account.

² Grätz, *Monatsschrift*, 1876, p. 4; Thierry, *St. Jérôme*, I., p. 253.

³ *Ep. xxii. ad Paulam* (ed. Mart. iv. 27), *Flent usque hodie Judaei et nudatis pedibus in cinere volutati sacco incubant. Ac ne quid desit superstitioni, ex ritu vanissimo Pharisaeorum primum cibum lentis accipiunt.*

⁴ *Praef. in Osee, in tabernis medicorum, etc.*

⁵ In Amos ii. 12, *Neque possunt more Judaicorum cauponum miscere aquam vino.*

⁶ In Js. iii. 2.

offends him. "Search through all the synagogues of the Jews," he exclaims, "and you will not find a single Rabbi who impresses on his flock the duty of despising earthly possessions, or who praises the virtue of poverty."¹ With biting scoffs he attacks their healthy, practical common sense. They do not pursue chimeras, but toil for the good things of earth.² This practical sense shows itself especially in their dealings with Christians. When pious pilgrims engage Jewish guides, they have to pay them heavily for their services.³ When Christians seek the opinion of Jews in Biblical matters, they have to remunerate them substantially for their instruction.⁴ When Christians wish to possess correct copies of the Bible prepared for them by Jews, they must compensate the scribes with considerable sums.⁵ When, finally, a Christian, desirous of completing his Biblical education, applies to Jewish teachers, he is charged high fees for the lessons.⁶

This practical cleverness not only obtained for the Jews a good social position. It enabled them also to afford shining proofs of their inborn charitableness, even towards their Christian persecutors. Many a Gentile's wretchedness was alleviated with the money of Jews. But this generosity aroused Jerome's apprehension that the Jews' gold might corrupt the Christian, and convert him to his benefactor's creed. He therefore recommends that Jewish assistance should be firmly and persistently refused.⁷ To the honour of the Church be it said that it did not forbid its adherents

¹ In Is. iii. 14.

² In Ez., iv. 13.

³ In Naum. i. 1; Thierry, a. a. O. I., 236.

⁴ Lib. II., *Invect. Ruff.* c. xxix. (II., 658), *Judaeus verba vendat ad pretium.*

⁵ Lib. II. *Contra Ruff.* (II., 530), *Magno sumptu sibi a Judaeis describere festinavit.*

⁶ Praef. in Job, *memini me Lyddaeum quendam non parvis redemisse nummis.*

⁷ *Epi. lii. ad Nepotianum* (I., 263), *Aut aurum repudiemus cum caeteris superstitionibus Judaeorum; aut si aurum placet, placent et Judaei, quos cum auro aut probare nobis necesse est aut damnare.*

to give alms to the Jewish poor;¹ although the almoners were only allowed a free hand when the Church members had been particularly liberal.² At that time, it was still admitted that God loved the Jews,³ and that they were not outside the pale of humanity.

3.—INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES.

Concerning the condition of the Jewish communities in the fourth century there are but scanty notices, so that the accounts which Jerome gives us in this connection are doubly welcome.

In early times the government of the communities was vested, not in the religious teachers, but in a few influential heads elected from the laity.⁴ This order of things seems to have been changed. Jerome tells us that the religious teachers were the leaders of the community. The spiritual guides were also the secular guardians. In the latter capacity they appear to have been styled *praepositi*. Before assuming office, they had to pass an examination, the object of which was to test their capacity for deciding ritual questions.⁵ From one of John Chrysostom's Homilies it is clear that the Jewish Presidents, there called Archontes, were chosen at the beginning of the year, *i.e.*, in the month of September (Loening, *Die Gemeindeverfassung des Urchristenthums*, Halle, 1889, No. I., p. 69). The custom had gradually obtained of "conferring synagogal functions

¹ *Ep. cxx. ad Hedibiam* (I., 814), Non quod in pauperes Judaeos . . . prohibeamus faciendam eleemosynam.

² *Lib. c. Vigilantium*, c. xv. (II., 319), Cunctis pauperibus, etiam Judaeis et Samaritanis, si tanta sit largitas, stipe porrigendas.

³ In Osee iii. 1, Quia Judaei praesens tempus diligentur a Domino.

⁴ Schürer, *Gemeindeverfassung der Juden in Rom*, p. 30.

⁵ *Ep. cxxi. ad Algasiam*, Quaest. X., Praepositos habent synagogis sapientissimos quosque, foedo opere delegatos, ut sanguinem virginis sive menstruatae, mundum vel immundum, si oculis discernere non potuerint gustu probent.

upon those who, searching in the Law of God day and night have no part in earthly benefits, and take God as their sole inheritance. Thus the interests of equity were served. The good things were not unequally distributed; the superfluity of some alleviated the needs of others.”¹ Jerome notes a touching instance of Jewish tenderheartedness; Jewish women took it upon themselves to provide religious teachers with their livelihood.² Although the communal heads were greatly esteemed by their flocks, their influence outside the Synagogue was not very considerable. Independent jurisdiction had been taken from them. In disputed cases, the Roman magistrates decided. The Jewish authorities were subordinated to them: “They have no judges of their own; even the heads left to them must submit to the decision of the Roman authority.”³ The Patriarchate, the single institution which still shone with some splendour in the dark days of trial, was dying. Nevertheless messengers were still sent out to collect contributions for the Patriarch.⁴

4.—JEWISH FAMILY LIFE.

Jewish family life has always been distinguished by affectionate tenderness. A few noteworthy details may be gleaned from Jerome. Children were sometimes weaned

¹ Lib. *c. Vigilantium*, c. xiv. (II. 399), *Hac in Judaea usque hodie perseverante consuetudine, non solum apud nos, sed et apud Hebraeos, ut qui in Lege Domini meditantur die ac nocte et partem non habent in terram nisi solum Deum, synagogarum et totius orbis foveantur ministeriis, ex aequalitate dumtaxat, non ut aliis refrigerium, et aliis sit tribulatio, sed ut aliorum abundantia aliorum sustentet inopiam.*

² Lib. I. *adv. Jovinianum*, c. xxv. [(II., 277), *Mulieribus, quae juxta morem Judaicum magistris de sua substantia ministrabant.*

³ In Is. iii. 2.

⁴ In *Ep. ad Galatas* i. 1, *Usque hodie a Patriarchis Judaeorum Apostolos mitti.* Grätz, *Geschichte der Juden*, iv.², 476, only mentions Eusebius and Epiphanius as sources, and omits that interesting remark in Jerome, who even tells the Hebrew name, *Slias* (שליס).

as late as the fifth year.¹ Parents carried their grown-up sons and daughters on their shoulders and in baskets.² In Jerome's time Jews were blessed with large families.³ Of asceticism there was no trace. Within the limits of the law, no check was placed on good living. The meals on Sabbath were excellent. The day was passed in idleness or sleep.⁴

Jerome notes with some mortification that, as a rule, the Jews reached an advanced old age.⁵ A death arouses the sympathy of the entire community. The custom still continued of employing professional wailing women who, with hair uncovered and bared breasts, summoning every one to mourning and weeping.⁶

5.—EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE JEWS.

For the education of the young there were elementary schools; and for the adults, Talmudical colleges. Importance was attached to the cultivation of the memory. Children had to learn by heart the alphabet in the regular and reverse order.⁷ The Pharisees are reproached by Jerome with always repeating, never reflecting.⁸ The strength of memory attained by this system of training arouses his admiration and chagrin. "In childhood they acquire the complete vocabulary of their language, and

¹ *Quaest. Hebr.* in Gen. xxi. 14.

² In Is. l. 18, *Ridiculum est more Judaico grandaevo filios et filias in ulvis humerisque portari.*

³ In Is. xlviii. 17, *Usque in praesentem diem instar vermiculorum pululant filios et nepotes.*

⁴ In Is. lvi. 2, *Neque enim prodest sedere in sabbatho, sive dormire aut epulis inhiare.*

⁵ In Is. iii. 2, *Usque ad deripiam senectutem saepe venire (Judaeos) conspicimus.*

⁶ In Jerem. ix. 17. Cp. *Moed Katan*, 28b.

⁷ In Jerem. xxv. 26, in *משנה*.

⁸ *Ep. cxxvii. ad Principiam* (I., 947), *Meditationem Legis in replicando quae scripta sunt, ut Judaeorum existimant Pharisei.*

learn to recite all the generations from Adam to Zerubbabel with such accuracy and facility, as if they were simply giving their names.”¹ It gave them pleasure to annoy the Christians by intoning² the long list of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, and great-great-grandfathers without a single slip. It was quite a common feat among the Jews to recite by heart the five books of Moses and the Prophets.³ This strain on the memory was not occasioned by a want of books. It was but an additional proof of the warm love which the Jews cherished for the ancient Law. Jerome often mentions the “*Archiva Judaeorum*,” by which he often merely refers to the Canon of Scripture, but sometimes also means libraries.⁴ Jewish houses possessed shelves loaded and cases packed with books.⁵ In Palestine, an institution analogous to our circulating libraries must have existed. Every synagogue seems to have possessed a collection of books, from which the members were permitted to borrow. Jerome’s Jewish teacher abused his privilege, and presented his Christian pupil with a volume lent him by the Synagogue authorities.⁶

Jerome stood in need of a copy of the Bible which the Synagogue regarded as authentic. Other copies of the Scriptures that were in circulation were most untrustworthy.⁷ But even erroneous copies of Holy Writ the

¹ In *Ep. ad Titum* iii. 9. The Apostle Paul also alludes to this quality of the Jews. *Ep. I. ad Timoth.* i. 4.

² *Ib.* putant se in nominibus referendis . . . in nepotibus, abnepotibus, avis, proavis et abavis doctiores.

³ In *Is.* lviii. 2. Libros Prophetarum ac Moysi memoriter revolventes (Judaei).

⁴ *E.g.* Praefatio in Esther (ix., 1566) librum Esther . . . ego de Archivis Judaeorum relevans.

⁵ In *Matt.* xxiii. 5, Judaei alioquin armariae et arcae habent libros.

⁶ *Ep.* xxxvi., *ad Damasum* (i. 158). Subito Hebraeus intervenit, deferens non pauca volumina, quae *de Synagoga quasi lecturus* acceperat et illico habes, inquit, quod postulaveras . . .

⁷ *Praef.* in *Gen.* (ix. 6), emendatiora sunt exemplaria Latina quam Graeca, Graeca quam Hebraea.

Christians could not prepare by themselves, their Hebrew knowledge was not sufficiently extensive. They had to order them of Jewish scribes, who charged heavy fees for their trouble.¹ This speaks well for the Biblical knowledge of the Palestinian Jews. Jerome assumes that in Scriptural questions, every Jew, without exception, is competent to give satisfactory replies.² The Jews, moreover, were acquainted, not only with the original text but also with the Septuagint,³ the Apocrypha,⁴ Aquila's Version,⁵ and generally with all works relating to Holy Writ. No sooner had Apollinaris Laodicens' writings appeared than the Jews read them and formed their opinions on them.⁶ Especially noteworthy is the fact that the Jews were at home in the New Testament as well as in the Old. They could explain difficulties in it which puzzled even the officially appointed Christian teachers.⁷ Jerome's Hebrew tutor even quotes Virgil.⁸ That this man knew Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Aramaic, is evident from every page of Jerome's works.

6.—RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE JEWS.

The Synagogue formed the centre of Jewish life. The Jews must have possessed several synagogues, as Jerome

¹ *Lib. ii. c. Ruffinum* (ii. 530), magno sumptu sibi a Judaeis describere festinavit . . .

² *Praef. in Samuel* (ix., 450).

³ *Ep. lvii. ad Pammachium* (i. 234, et passim). The Jews impugn certain passages in the Septuagint.

⁴ *Praef. in Daniel*, the history of Susanna is ridiculed by the Jews.

⁵ *Ep. xxxvi. ad Damasum* (i. 165), Aquilam . . . proprie transtulisse omnis Judaea conclamat.

⁶ In *Eccles. v. 17*, nec Judaeis placere nec Christianis.

⁷ In *Is. xi. 1*, Illud quod in Evangelio . . . omnes quaerunt Ecclesiastici et non inveniunt ubi scriptum sit, eruditi Hebraeorum de hoc loco assumptum putant.

⁸ *Praef. in Daniel* (ix. 1362), illud in sua lingua ingerente : Labor omnia vincit improbus.

drops a remark, in his bitter vein, on the number of them.¹ He also knew that services were held in the Synagogue by day and night.² He feels surprised that the Jews do not kneel during prayers.³ Among the Jewish prayers he has much to say concerning the Benediction against the heretics; he also occasionally quotes other Jewish prayers.⁴ The most solemn part of the service was undoubtedly the chanting of the Psalms.⁵ With especial frequency and solemnity was the 117th Psalm, the Hallel, sung.⁶

Besides prayer and song, the sermon formed an essential part of the Service. Concerning its popularity among the Jews, to which the Midrash bears ample testimony, Jerome also furnishes some data. "They say one to another: Come, let us listen to this or that Rabbi who expounds the divine law, with such marvellous eloquence; then they applaud and make a noise, and gesticulate with their hands."⁷ "The Preachers make the people believe that the fictions which they invent are true; and after they have in theatrical fashion called forth applause . . . they arrogantly step forward, speak proudly and usurp the authority of rulers."⁸ Jerome was an attentive observer;

¹ In Is. lvii. 12. Synagogarum turba.

² In Jerem. xviii. 17, usque hodie diebus ac noctibus in Synagogis invocant nomen Dei.

³ In Is. xlvi. 2, genu flectere . . . quod Judaei mentis superbiam demonstrantes, omnino non faciunt.

⁴ In Is. lxiv. at the end, there is the following Jewish prayer: Super his omnibus Domine sustinebis et affliges [Var. sustinebimus et afflige] nos atque humiliabis vehementer. I do not understand this.

⁵ In Amos v. 23, Judaeorum . . . Psalmi, quos in Synagogis canunt, tumultus (sunt) . . . Domino.

⁶ *Ep.* xx. *ad Damasum* (i. 66).

⁷ In Ezek. xxxiii. 33. Venite audiamus illum et illum, mira eloquentia predicationis suae verba volventem; plaususque commovent et vociferantur et jactant manus.

⁸ In Ezek. xxxiv. 31. Qui quum populo persuaserint, vera esse quae fingunt, et in theatralem modum plausus concitaverint et clamores, immemores fiunt imperitiae suae et adducto supercilio, libratisque sermonibus, magistrorum sibi assumunt auctoritatem.

the Jewish preacher's theatrical manner is also mentioned by his contemporary, St. John Chrysostom.¹ "On certain days they recite their traditions to their pupils; on such occasions they are wont to say: οἱ σοφοὶ δευτερώσω, i.e., 'the masters explain.'"² From this last remark we see that Greek terms for purely Jewish institutions had been adopted and were already fixed in popular usage. Thus, the teachers who occupied themselves with Halacha were called in Greek σοφοί;³ those, on the other hand, who devoted their chief attention to Hagada, were called δευτερωταί.⁴ It is remarkable that the title σοφός for Rabbi was maintained throughout the Middle Ages⁵ in communities of Greek origin, e.g., in Sicily.

Jerome naturally does not approve of the Rabbinical teachers. He reproves them for not preserving a composed demeanour while preaching, and says they find a pleasure in shouting.⁶ Self-maceration—at that time already regarded by the Christians as a virtue—was not practised by the Jewish Rabbis; he therefore regarded them as voluptuaries.⁷ He does not believe that these gourmands could bring it upon themselves to fast twice a week, on Monday and Thursday.⁸ The nature of a Jewish sermon is also accurately defined. "The Jews," he says, "rush on certain days into the Synagogue and pore in God's law to find

¹ *Opp. ed. Montfaucon* (i. 656), καὶ παιξουσιν (οἱ νῦν πατριαρχαὶ παρ' ὑμῖν) καθάπερ ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ.

² *Ep. cxxi. ad Algasiam*, Cp. שְׁנַר חֲכָמִים or תָּנוּ רַבָּנִין.

³ *Ep. cxxi. ad Algasiam* (*Quaest. x.*). Doctores eorum σοφοί, hoc est sapientes, vocantur.

⁴ So in several passages.

⁵ Gudemann, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens der Juden in Italien*, p. 289.

⁶ In Is. lviii. 3, ad orationem deferatis clamorem.

⁷ *E.g.*, in Is. lviii. 3, epulis saturatus Phariseus . . .

⁸ *Ib.* bis in Sabbatho se jejunare jactabant. This seems to be the earliest notice of שְׁנֵי וַחֲמִשֵּׁי תַעֲנִית, which will correct what Graetz says on the subject in his *Monatsschrift*, 1854, p. 191.

out what Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the rest of the saints (caeteri sanctorum) may have done.”¹ The narrative Agada is here meant, such as we find it in rich exuberance in our Midrashic literature.

The free Agadic homilies at the reading of the Law are to be distinguished from the Sermon. The Biblical verse was first translated, then freely expounded in the Agadic style.² The tradition, or Agada, was always connected with a Biblical verse; even a well-known Agada was always repeated whenever a passage was reached in the reading of the Torah with which it had any relation.³ But not all the Agadas that were in circulation were fit to be publicly read. The recital of several was interdicted⁴ on account of their obscenity. Here it should be noted that the Agadas must already have been fixed in writing, as otherwise Jerome could not have spoken of them as being read.

7.—HERETICAL MOVEMENTS AMONG THE JEWS.

Palestine was also in the fourth century an arena, where the various Jewish and Christian sects contended for victory. The *Minim*, who were the objects of so much dread to the Talmudists, were disseminated among all communities of the Orient.⁵ There was a multitude of baptised Jews, and the rigorous Talmudic teachers felt

¹ In Is. lviii. 2.

² In Michaeam ii. 11, juxta id quod nobis ab Hebraeis est traditum exponamus et . . . postea de eorum translatione tractabimus.

³ *Quaest. Hebr.* In Gen. xiv. 8. Jerome speaks of the Jewish tradition, that the first-born originally served as priests; he afterwards says, Gen. xxvii. 15, Et in hoc tradunt Hebraei . . . The same tradition.

⁴ He is speaking of the tradition that Jewish women in Babylon had submitted themselves to certain men of guile, in the hope that they would give birth to the Messiah. (In Jerem. xxix. 21.) Unde et a plebisque ac paene omnibus Hebraeis, ipsa (traditio) quasi fabula non recipitur nec legitur in Synagogis eorum, *Cp.* N. Brüll, *Jahrb.* iii. 9.

⁵ *Ep.* cxii. *ad S. Augustinum*, i. 741, usque hodie per totas Orientis synagogas inter Judaeos haeresis est, quae dicitur Mineorum . . .

called upon to proceed with all possible severity against them; so much so, that the bishops had to intervene in their favour.¹ But these baptised Jews were by no means an acquisition on which the Church could congratulate itself. They either clung firmly to the Jewish enactments, even after baptism, or they led a life which was anything but Christian: "Take any Jew you please who has been converted to Christianity," Jerome writes to St. Augustine, "and you will see that he practises the rite of circumcision on his newborn son, keeps the Sabbath, abstains from forbidden food, and brings a lamb as an offering on the 14th of Nisan."²

Transgressions of the Law were not uncommon among the lower classes. Jerome reports that some Jews, on an occasion of mourning, cut incisions in their flesh and made their heads bald.³ The use of Tephillin and Zizith had not yet become general. Our author is told by Palestinian Jews, as a curiosity, that in Babylon the Rabbis wear phylacteries and zizith.⁴ Apostates had to suffer persecutions at the hands of the Rabbis. Excommunications must have been common.⁵

8.—SOME CHRISTIANS STRICTLY ADHERE TO JEWISH CUSTOMS.

Even after more than three centuries' separation, triumphant Christianity had not yet emancipated itself from the mother religion; it was still subject to the influence of the Jewish Law. Our author rails most bitterly at the superstition of the Christian women (*mulierculae*), who, ascribing to the Jewish phylacteries an indefinite

¹ Grätz, *Geschichte*, IV. ² 385.

² *Ep.* cxii. *ad S. Augustinum*, I. 744.

³ In Jerem. xvi. 5.

⁴ In Ezek. xxiv. 15; in Matt. xxiii. 5.

⁵ In Is. lix. 15, ut quicumque a traditionibus Judaeorum capierit recedere, statim pateret insidiis et persecutionibus, ita ut . . . expulerint de Synagogis.

but vast magical power, covered up crucifixes, the Gospels, and other sacred relics with them, and thought they were thus performing a work pleasing to God.¹ The rites of the Synagogue were imitated;² the Christians regarded it, indeed, as holier than the Church.³ On the occasion of a death they rent their garments after the Jewish custom.⁴ About this time arose the order of the Coenobites, who arranged their mode of life according to the old Essene pattern.⁵ At this period, too, the sect of the Photinians was instituted. They adhered so closely to the Jewish Law that their dogma was termed the Jewish dogma, and yet it had to be admitted that there was much in it that was good and wise.⁶ It even appears that at that time Jewish birth was considered a weighty factor in the selection of Heads of the Church.⁷ But it was mainly the lower classes who could not completely cut themselves off from the Jewish Law, the enactments of which appeared to them more rational and wise than those of Christian codes.⁸ The dependence of the Church on the Synagogue is best described by Ruffinus, who sarcastically observes that if a few Jews were to institute new rites, the Church would have to follow suit and immediately adopt them.⁹

¹ In Matt. xxiii. 5, Quae habent quidem zelum Dei sed non juxta scientiam. We have come across similar accounts in the earlier Church Fathers.

² In Ezech. xxxiii. 33, Tales sunt usque hodie multi in Ecclesiis.

³ Graetz, *History*, IV.² 385.

⁴ This is clear from a notice in Gregory of Nyssa's essay, *Περὶ τοῦ βίου τῆς μακαρίας*, in Oehler, *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, I., 188, p. 2. περιβόη-
ξασθαι τὸ ἱμάριον Μακρίνης.

⁵ *Ep.* xxii. *ad Eustochium*, i. 118.

⁶ *Chronicon*, VIII., 816, Photiniarum dogma Judaicum, qui [Photinus] multa continentia est ingenii bona uno superbiae malo perdidit.

⁷ In Is. lxi. 3, Quotus enim quisque Ecclesiarum princeps est de Judaeis et non de alienigenis atque externarum gentium hominibus?

⁸ *Ep.* cxxi. *ad Algasiam*, i. 878, Videntur igitur observationes Judaicae apud imperitos et vilem plebeculam imaginem habere rationis humanaeque sapientiae.

⁹ Ruffini, *Invect.*, lib. I., c. v. ; II., 589, Nisi forte a Judaeis aliquibus nova nunc lege promulgatur Ecclesiae ut etiam ista discamus.

9.—CONTROVERSY BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS.

In Jerome's time there was no lack of discussions between Church and Synagogue. The Church militant still enjoyed its youthful vigour; it had both the desire and the strength for fighting. It was considered a great undertaking to enter on a polemic with the Jews.¹ The discussions were conducted with excessive heat; they are described as regular combats.² Jerome says that, on the Jewish side, the efforts that were put forth in these verbal contests were appalling.³ The Jews are charged with an inordinate love of religious disputation. They are in great distress if no opportunity presents itself of slandering and ridiculing the Christians.⁴

With regard to the Jewish method of argument, our author tells us that they never kept to the point, always introduced matters foreign to the discussion, and often wandered away to other subjects altogether.⁵ The only construction that can justly be placed on this statement is that the Jews were most reluctant to enter into controversy on certain topics. The same questions also seem to have been put over and over again. The Scriptural text was a perpetual bone of contention, the Jews insisting that the Christian copies of the Bible were erroneous.⁶ On some points that had been discussed *ad nauseam* the Christians knew beforehand what their opponents would

¹ Praef. in Psalm, Aliud Judaeis singula verba calumniantibus respondere.

² In Is. vii. 14, Ut cum Judaeis conferamus pedem contentioso fune, etc.

³ In *Ep. ad Titum*, iii. 9, Ut non magnopere pertimescamus supercilium Judaeorum, solutis labiis et obtorta lingua et otridente saliva et rasa fauce gaudentium.

⁴ In Is. vii. 14, Nequaquam praebeamus eis risum nostrae imperitiae.

⁵ In Is. xlv. 6, Judaei . . . in locis difficilimis liberae disputationis excursu nascentes fugiunt quaestiones.

⁶ Very frequently in Jerome's writings.

say.¹ At this time the Jews could claim, among the different sects, many adherents to their principles. Some heretical Christians, for instance, agreed with them on most questions.² Influential members of the Church even, who were such important personages that Jerome is afraid to name them, could not help acknowledging that, on some points, the Jews were right.³ Victorious Christianity had still a formidable opponent in Heathendom, and it was but natural that the Heathens sometimes employed Jewish weapons in their controversy with the Christians.⁴ One of the consequences of Julian's attempt to revive Heathendom was a hot attack on Christianity. Julian himself fought it with the pen, and made use of Jewish arguments.⁵

10.—MESSIANIC HOPES OF THE JEWS.

The Church continually cherished the fond delusion that it would ultimately receive the Jews into its bosom. It is noteworthy that, as early as 400 A.D., the Jews were forced to listen to Christian sermons, with the avowed purpose of inducing them to embrace the dominant creed.⁶ The daughter-religion was then as much disappointed in her expectations as she has been ever since. Judaism *hoped*,

¹ *Ep. xlii. ad Principiam*, i. 236, Interrogemus Judaeos, quae sit ista filia (Ps. xlv.) . . . non dubito, quin synagogam respondeant.

² *Judaei et nostri Judaizantes*—a formula used by Jerome.

³ In Sophon. iii. 14, Si quis ergo Christianorum et maxime novorum prudentium quorum nomina taceo, ne quemquam laedere videar.

⁴ In Matt. xxi. 21, Latrant contra nos Gentilium canes in suis voluminibus.

⁵ Compare in Osee xi. 1; in Matt. i. 16, ix. 9, *et passim*. It has not yet been sufficiently regarded that the Jews referred many Messianic verses to Julian. We frequently find such interpretations in Jerome.

⁶ *Ep. xciii. Jerosolomytanae Synodi* (i. 549), Atque utinam sanctorum orationibus non nos inquietarent Judaici serpentes et Samaritanorum incredibilis stultitia . . . quorum turba quam plurima et ad veritatem praedicationis omnino auribus obturantes in similitudinem luporum gregeia Christi circuientes.

and this hope was a tower of strength which saved it from succumbing to the temptations of the Church. The Jews deliberately turned away from the gloomy scenes before them, to revel in the prospect of the brilliant picture which their vivid imagination conjured up. One day the Jewish people will again revive, Israel will become glorious, Israel who is so near to God, Israel who has just cause for pride, and who may confidently challenge the judgment of God and men.¹ Israel's dispersion by the Romans does not involve destruction. God, who was with him by the waters of Egypt, by the streams of Babylon, in the fire of Macedonian persecution, will not leave him when enveloped in the flames kindled by Rome.² It is true his numbers are diminished; but still a remnant will always survive at last to witness the arrival of the Messianic era and to experience God's mercy.³ The outcasts of Judah will be gathered together and brought back to Jerusalem. Great will then be the prosperity of the nation. God will deliver into their hands the sons and daughters of Rome, who will be sold as slaves, not to their neighbours, the Persians and Ethiopians, but to the Sabeans, that most distant of peoples.⁴ "Though history has often disappointed them, they endeavour to prove that all the prophecies must ultimately be fulfilled; they transport themselves in imagination to the Messianic times, and console themselves with the reflection that what has not yet come true will be fulfilled in the distant future. Moab,

¹ In Is. lviii. 3, *Est alia temeritas Judaeorum, quasi fiduciae bonae conscientiae, judicium postulant istum (Ps. xxv. 12) et appropinquare deo desiderant.*

² In Is. xliii. 2. Thus was this verse interpreted by the Jews.

³ In Is. xlv. 6, *Judaei et nostri Judaizantes dicunt Israel ad modicum derelictum, ut in adventu Christi ejus misereatur Deus.*

⁴ In Joel ii. 7, *Promittunt sibi Judaei immo somniunt, quod in ultimo tempore congreguntur a Domino et reducantur in Jerusalem. Nec hac felicitate contenti, ipsum Deum suis manibus Romanorum filios et filias asserunt traditurum, ut vendant eos Judaei, non Persis et Aethiopibus et caeteris nationibus, quae vicinae sunt, sed Sabaeis, genti longissimae.*

and the sons of Ammon, the Egyptians, as well as the Philistines and Idumea, who now afflict the Jews, will then receive their punishment. But why, we ask them, should God punish just these nations? Why not the whole globe on the entire surface of which the Jews wander? Gaul, Britain, Spain, Italy, Africa, in fact, all nations, ought also to be punished for the same offence, for the whole world keeps the Jews in captivity.”¹

It was, indeed, the opinion of the Jews that all the nations who had oppressed them would be called to account. In order that Israel's glory might be complete, the angels will build a new Jerusalem, a beautiful and lofty city, ornamented with precious stones and fine gold.² The saints will rise again, re-clothed in their bodily form and re-endowed with their human qualities and capacity for pleasures.³ The joyous banquets of the Messianic times are painted in the brightest colours. Christians who heard of the delights in store for pious Jews were so attracted by the picture, that they became converts to Judaism.⁴ In

¹ In Sophon. ii. 8. Making allowances for the exaggeration in the phrase “*totus orbis*,” the above-named countries may, in fact, already have been inhabited by Jews; this passage would thus be the oldest testimony to the presence of Jews in Britain. It is likewise worthy of notice that Jerome only knew this Jewish Agada in its external form. He had no conception that by Moab, Ammon, Edom, etc., the Jews meant, not the extinct peoples, but nations still living. It speaks well for his Jewish teachers that their intimacy with him did not tempt them to betray to him the esoteric significance of the Agada. However, Jerome had enough acuteness to guess that by Edom the Jews really meant Rome: in Is. xi. 11 (רומה, רומה), *Semper in Idumaeae nomine Romanos existimant demonstrari*.

² In Is. xlix. 14, *Judaei et nostri Judaizantes putant auream atque gemmatam (Jerusalem) de caelestibus ponendam*. As well known, this belief was, in the earliest times, one of the dogmas of Christianity, and served to console its followers for the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem.

³ *Ruff. Invect.* lib. I., c. v. (II. 589), *Est Judaeorum vere de resurrectione talis opinio, quod resurgunt quidem, sed ut carnalibus deliciis et luxuriis caeterisque voluptatibus corporis perfruantur*.

⁴ In Is. lix. 5, *Qui audiens traditiones Judaicas ad escas se mille annorum voluerit praeparare*.

their religious ecstasy, the Jews had even definitely fixed the time of Messiah's triumphal entry into the holy city. The new redemption, like the old, will take place in the middle of the month of Nissan, on the first midnight of Passover, as at the Exodus from Egypt.¹ The tradition was also firmly held, that the Messiah would first raise his standard in Babylon, would next march into Egypt and conquer it, and then would finally inaugurate his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.² This will, however, be preceded by the war with Gog and Magog, in which much blood will be spilt.³ Finally, the glorious era of universal peace will set in; in the new and resplendent Jerusalem the Messiah will hold his court, surrounded by all pious nations who will do homage to his supremacy.⁴ The Jews will be exclusive possessors of the sacred Scriptures; the Christians who had on account of these writings caused them so much suffering will no longer be allowed to retain copies of the Bible.⁵ All disputes and misunderstandings will consequently cease; all nations will cherish the same belief, all will understand and speak Hebrew.⁶ Such was the conception then current of the Messianic era.

In connection with the foregoing remarks, it is not uninteresting to inquire what conception the Jews formed of the Messiah's person. It is necessary to note first that the

¹ In Matt. xxv. 5, *Traditio Judaeorum est Christum media nocte venturum in similitudinem Aegyptii temporis, quando Pascha celebratum est.*

² In Daniel xii. 6.

³ In Joel iv. 13, *Judaei et nostri Judaizantes arbitrantes ultimo tempore, quando Jerusalem fuerit instaurata, sub mille annorum imperio contra Dei populum esse venturas [gentes Gog et Magog].*

⁴ In Joel iv. 16, *Judaei et nostri Judaizantes putant, Christum habitaturum in Sion et in Jerusalem aurea atque gemmata sanctorum populos congregandos.*

⁵ In Micha vii. 9, *Hoc sibi Judaei usque hodie pollicentur . . . et ajunt: In die illa . . . Scripturas sanctas . . . quae nunc tenentur a nobis tolli de manibus nostris et tradi populo Judaeorum. Compare Exod. Rabba, c. 47, כתב לך כו'.*

⁶ In Sophon. iii. 9.

Messiah was called in Judæo-Hellenic circles ἡλειμμένος, the "Anointed," an exact equivalent of the Hebrew משיח, but that this term must be distinguished from the word χριστός, by which the Christians denominated their Messiah. The name Christ was not pleasant to the Jews, since it had become the watchword of their bitterest enemies, and therefore they preferred to connote the same idea by the expression ἡλειμμένος. That the choice of this word was an open protest against Christianity is proved by Aquila's use of it in the Christological Psalm ii. 2, against which Irenæus made a strong protest.¹ In Jerome's time the word had obtained wide currency among the Jews, and he cannot hide his chagrin at the fact.² A Messiah of the tribe of Joseph is nowhere mentioned; the Jews, however, even at that time believed, as we have already noticed, that the Messiah's arrival would be heralded by Elijah.³ The Messiah's essential nature is defined in the sentence: He will be eternal justice (justitia sempiterna).⁴ The Messiah is also the whirlwind and storm that will sweep Israel's enemies off the earth.⁵ It is interesting to learn the language which was used in praying to the long looked for Messiah. Here is a petition, clothed in Midrashic form, which, starting from Zechariah ix. 11, 12, quotes several other Hebrew texts. "O Messiah, in whose advent we believe, thou whose dominion will extend to the corners of the earth,⁶ in the blood of thy covenant,⁷ in which according to Ezekiel (xvi. 6, 22), thou didst find

¹ Zipser, in *Ben Chananja*, VI. (1863), p. 181.

² We can only quote a few passages; to quote them all would be impossible: Antichristus, ut dicitur, ἡλειμμένος σου, in Is. xxvii. 13; Judæi sub ἡλειμμένω σου, in Zach. xiv. 15; Referunt ad ἡλειμμένον, id est Christum suum, in Maleachi iii. 1. Compare the following remark.

³ In Mal. iii., the end, Judæi et Judaizantes haeretici ante ἡλειμμένον suum Eliam putant esse venturum.

⁴ In Dan. ix. 24, in the name of the Jews, according to Jer. xxxiii. 16.

⁵ In Is. iv. 5, Hunc locum Judæi ad Antichristum referunt, quem per turbinem et tempestatem significari aestimant.

⁶ ומשלו עד אפסי ארץ.

⁷ בדם בריתך.

Jerusalem, the defiled, and didst plight thy troth unto her (?)¹ in the covenant, which thou didst form with Abraham at the division of the calf, the ram, and the goat; thou didst release thy people Israel from captivity,² and from the fiery furnace of the Chaldeans who know no mercy.³ O Israelites, vanquished (by the Romans), do ye therefore also trust in the Lord; return to the well-fortified city of Jerusalem,⁴ for you still have God on your side; God who has promised that like Job you will receive a double recompense for the sufferings you have undergone in exile."⁵

11.—CONCERNING THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

In the knowledge of Hebrew the Jews possessed an advantage over the Christians that was not to be despised. They were intensely proud of this superiority, and continually annoyed the Christians by letting them feel their ignorance.⁶ "The Jews are proud of their knowledge of the Law, and parade the fact that they can correctly repeat by heart all the Scriptural names. As, however, these are foreign to us and we do not know their etymology, we pronounce them faultily. When we happen to make a mistake in the accent and lengthen a short syllable or shorten a long syllable, they laugh at our ignorance, especially if the mistake is in an aspirate or in a guttural. If we do not pronounce these surnames and the language generally—which to us is barbarous—in precisely the same way as

¹ Quo compersam Jerusalem juxta Ezechielem in suo sanguine reperisti et inisti.

² שלחתי אסירך מבור.

³ אין מים בו. A free Agadic interpretation.

⁴ שובו לבצרון.

⁵ גם היום מגיר משנה אשיב לך.

⁶ In Ezech. xxxvii. 12. Solent ridere de nobis et attollere supercilium et inflatis buccis ructare scientiam Scripturarum, si non dicam sensuum discrepantiam, qua si fuerit, jure reprehenditur, si verborum dissonantiam in nostris codicibus potuerint demonstrare. In Is. xxiv. 6, Judaei, qui se solos legem accepisse Domini gloriantur.

the Jews do, they break out into loud laughter and swear that they cannot understand what we say.”¹ It must have been very difficult for the Christians to learn the Hebrew language. A friend of Jerome’s, the noble Paula, a scion of the Scipio family, was so far successful in the study of Hebrew, that she could intone the Psalms in Hebrew without a trace of the Latin accent.² Jerome was still further advanced; he studied Hebrew so zealously, that his Latin, far from influencing his Hebrew pronunciation, was actually modified by it. Even his literary style had become changed by his devotion to Hebrew. At the end of his commentary on Haggai he says: “I entreat you, reader, forgive me for communicating my thoughts without embellishments; do not look in my writings for beauty of expression, I have lost it long ago by my study of the Hebrew language.”³ His works afford ample evidence that this apology was not a mere rhetorical figure. Hebrew idiom is frequent; he employs Biblical turns and phrases, Biblical metaphors and explanations, and continually alludes to Biblical incidents and stories.

12.—THE HEBREW LANGUAGE IN EGYPT.

Of the flourishing condition of the Hebrew language at that period Jerome gives such an astonishing account, that all who have occasion to study the history of the Hebrew

¹ In *Ep. ad Titum*, iii. 9, Judaei, qui in eo se jactant et putant Legis habere notitiam, si nomina teneant singulorum; quae quia barbara sunt et etymologias eorum non novimus, plerumque proferuntur corrupte a nobis. Et si forte erravimus in accentu, in extensione, solent irridere nos imperitiae, maxime in asperationibus et quibusdam cum rasura gulae litteris proferendis. Siegfried who, in Stade’s *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1884, proposed to himself the task of fixing the ancient pronunciation from Jerome’s accounts, overlooked this important passage.

² *Ep. cviii. ad Eustochium*, i. 714, ita ut Psalmas hebraice caneret (Paula) et sermonem absque ulla linguae proprietate personaret.

³ *Praef. Libri iii., Ep. ad Galatas*. He complains, omnem sermonis elegantiam et Latini eloquii venustatem stridoris lectionis Hebraicae sordidatum esse.

tongue are bound to examine it closely. He tells us that, in the year 400 A.D., *i.e.*, about six hundred years after its death in Palestine, its Motherland, Hebrew, as a living language, was still surviving in Egypt. The savants who deny that the ancient Egyptian tongue is a branch of the Semitic stock, cannot refuse to acknowledge that the old Egyptian language possessed Semitic elements in abundance; this they ascribe to the contact, during a period of many centuries, between the Egyptians and the Jews settled amongst them.¹

Suppose we went a step further and assumed that there remained in Egypt, from early times, a small portion of the Jewish population, who continued to speak Hebrew? It does not need a very lively imagination to accept this hypothesis. It is conceivable that the land which was in a sense, the cradle of Judaism, became its asylum after it had received its first terrible blow, and continued to be its home during the dissolution of the Jewish nationality.

Jerome's account, therefore, ought not in itself to be impugned. It is only a pity that, as generally understood, it does not really exist! Let us examine it more closely. "Everybody knows," he says, "that five towns in Egypt still speak the Canaanitish, *i.e.*, the Syrian language."² Now we ask: Is there here any mention of Hebrew? Certainly modern criticism insists that Hebrew is really the old language of Canaan. But Philo terms Hebrew the Chaldaic tongue. In Josephus and the New Testament, the Aramaic vernacular is spoken of as Hebrew, But it is quite inconceivable that Jerome, who knew that Hebrew and Aramaic were totally different and distinct should have confounded the two languages, or even, in a

¹ The various views have been collected by E. Meier, in *Die Semiten in ihrem Verhältniss zu Chamiten und Japhetiten*, p. 70 ff.; and exhaustively treated by Lenormant, *Histoire ancienne de l'Orient*, 9th edition, i. 275 and ii. 46.

² In Is. xix. 18, . . . Civitates, quas usque hodie in Aegypto lingua Chanaanitide, hoc est Syra loqui, manifestum est.

critical mood, have hit upon the idea that Hebrew was the old Canaanitish dialect. Why should Jerome have expressed himself in so peculiar a fashion, when in other places he calls Hebrew, scores of times, as it ought to be called — Hebrew? If he referred to Hebrew, why does he say in an explanatory note that he means Syriac? Surely the former language was as well known to his readers as the latter? Does not this note rather prove that a language is here spoken of, whose existence might not have been universally known, and that it was therefore needful to explain the uncommon term—Canaanitish, by one more familiar, Syriac. The Hebrew language, however, could certainly not have been meant. For the present, we will therefore merely assume that Jerome speaks of the Canaanitish tongue. How did he become acquainted with this tongue? He himself explicitly tells us: "I came to Sior, the river of Egypt; . . . to the five towns of Egypt which speak Canaanitish."¹ Thus, we see that, in the course of his travels, he had visited the five cities. The object of his journey was to visit the places named in Scripture; and, therefore, he only mentions those names which there occur, and among them prefers the old to the modern ones.²

Here we have the key to the enigma: Jerome uses the old Biblical terms, and calls even the river by its ancient name Sior (שִׁיזֹר). Consequently, as he expresses himself in Biblical language, he calls the language of Egypt the language of Canaan; and rightly so, for Egypt even then retained its old name Cham.³ Because Cham, Noah's son, was Canaan's father, the language of Canaan

¹ *Ep. cviii. ad Eustochium* (xxii. 890, ed. Migne, ser. Lat.), Veniam ad Ægypti fluvium Sior, qui interpretatur *turbidus*; et quinque Ægypti transeam civitates, quae loquuntur lingua Chanaanitide.

² *Ib.* (p. 882) ea tantum loca nominabo, quae Sacris Voluminibus continentur.

³ *Quaest. Hebr.* in Gen. ix. 18, Usque hodie Ægyptiorum lingua Ham dicitur.

was the language of Egypt (Cham), and in the Bible it alone is mentioned (שפת כנען). Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find (שפת מצרים). Jerome was therefore compelled to speak of the Canaanite and not of the Egyptian language. He never thought of designating Hebrew by the term Canaanite; he indeed says: "The Canaanite language partakes of the characters of Hebrew and Egyptian. It is closely related to Hebrew,"¹ but therefore clearly not identical with Hebrew. What language could this have been? Every reasonable man will at once think of Coptic. When Egypt, or at least Lower Egypt, had become quite hellenised, it was strange to hear Coptic sounds; that this dialect was the vernacular in five towns seemed to Jerome a proof that Isaiah's prophecy had been fulfilled. He was a Christian, and the population of those towns was also Christian. That Coptic was spoken in many other parts of the country did not greatly trouble him, or might possibly have been unknown to him, as he only visited Biblical scenes. Isaiah's prophecy caused him to style this language Canaanitish. And as it was unfamiliar to him,² he confounded it with the old Egyptian, *i.e.*, Canaanitish; but finding Semitic elements in this foreign idiom, he could describe it more definitely as Syriac, *i.e.*, related to Hebrew. It is quite time, therefore, that this notice of Jerome should be reduced to its real worth.³

13.—JEROME'S JEWISH TRADITIONS.

Jerome has preserved for us a large number of Jewish traditions. In the first place come those which aim at com-

¹ In Is. xix. 13, *Lingua Chanaanitide quae inter Hebraeam et Ægyptiam media est et Hebraeae magna ex parte confinis.*

² *Lib. I., adv. Ruf. c. 10, Ego, philosophus, rhetor, grammaticus, dialecticus, hebraeus, graecus, latinus, trilinguis, etc.*—therefore not Coptic.

³ Winer *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*, II., 500, Anmerk. 1, writes: "Hebrew or Syriac is said to have been transplanted by Colonists (?) into the provinces on the Eastern boundaries of Egypt, and was the vernacular there even in Jerome's times."

pleting the Scriptural story. Jerome usually called these traditions "*fabulae*," because they are in narrative form;¹ we might term them historical Agadas. In this class he draws a distinction between those legends which lived in the memory of the people, and which he therefore highly valued,² and those which were only invented by individuals.³ The latter class of tradition was either suggested by indications in the Bible,⁴ or were the product of pure fancy. Imaginative teachers invented them for the purpose of edification. Jerome was also indebted to his Jewish teachers for the explanation of words and subjects.⁵ Verbal exegesis took the form either of grammatical rules,⁶ or elucidations of difficult terms; and always, of course, in the spirit of the Agada.⁷ The subjects explained are invariably connected with the Bible, and the expositions, with the Jews, rest partly on traditional knowledge,⁸ and partly are conjectural and arbitrary deductions.⁹ This kind of Jewish teaching is, on the whole, condemned by Jerome. He drew his Jewish traditions and views not only from the oral communica-

¹ In Jerem. xxix. 21, he calls the same thing now *traditio*, now *fabulae*. In many places, he uses the expression *fabulae* for the Agada, but then they were always narrative.

² *Z. B.* in Is. lvii. 1, concerning the assassination of Isaiah: quod apud eos certissima traditio est.

³ In Ezech. xlv. 10, Traditionem accepimus Hebraeorum non lege praeceptam, sed magistrorum arbitris inoletam.

⁴ In Osee x. 2, tradunt Hebraei fabulam . . . auspicionem suam Scripturarum auctoritate confirmantes.—*Ep.* xxxvi. *ad Damasum*, i. 162, . . . multis Scripturarum locis testimonia contrahentes.—In Daniel vi. 4, hoc illi dixerint, qui propter occasionem unius verbi longas solent fabulas texere.

⁵ In Is. xxii. 5, hoc traditionis est Hebraicae et Scriptura non loquitur.

⁶ In Is. xl. 9, nec de hac re apud eos ulla dubitatio est, Spiritum sanctum lingua sua appellari genere feminino, Rua codsa (רוחא קדשא).

⁷ In Ezech. ix. 3 (קדם) quum ab Hebraeo quaererem quid significaret, respondit mihi Graeco sermone appellari καλαμάριον ab eo quod in illo calami recondantur. The Jew, therefore, spoke Greek.

⁸ In Is. xxxii. 14 (עפל ובהי) quas Judaei duas turres in Jerusalem fuisse arbitrantur.

⁹ In Is. xlv. 15, Hebraei stulta contentione nituntur asserere.

tions of his teachers and of contemporary Jews, but also from collections of the Midrashim, *i.e.*, from written sources, a point which deserves to be specially emphasised. I have already quoted a passage that some Agadas are not *read* in Synagogue;¹ they must, therefore, have been preserved in a written form. Jerome found, probably in books, Hebrew traditions.² He speaks of the secret knowledge possessed by the heads of the Synagogue, which he wishes to reveal to the Latins.³ He was certainly not told this mystic knowledge, and must, therefore, have copied it from a book. Here I wish to point out another important fact. Jerome translates from the Hebrew into Latin. Although the Jews in Palestine always conversed in Greek, those Agadas were compiled in Hebrew. In Alexandria, however, the Agadas, or rather Apocryphas, were also composed in Greek. Translation usually implies a written original. Jerome must, therefore, no doubt, have seen many Agadas in MS. Yet certain remarks of his point to the fact that he also translated oral traditions.⁴ However, whether Jerome had written or oral traditions, it is at all events clear that he translated, and in his versions, as in other translations, the original is still discernible. Accidental agreement between Latin and Hebrew tradition is possible; but when technical terms of the Midrash recur in the Latin, this is not pure coincidence, but a conscious translation from Hebrew. Note the oft-repeated formulas: "Hoc Scriptura nunc dicit = זה שאמר הכתוב; and "Hoc est quod dicitur" = הודא הכריב, which conclude many traditions, when supported

¹ In Jerem. xxix. 21, *nec legitur* in synagogis eorum.

² In Zach. iv. 2, *Haec ab Hebraei dicta reperimus*.

³ *Ib.* vi. 9, *Semel proposui arcanæ eruditionis Hebraicæ et magistrorum synagogæ reconditam disciplinam, eam dumtaxat, quæ Scripturis sanctis convenit, Latinis auribus prodere*.

⁴ *Ib.* vi. 1, *Haec ut potuimus, immo ut accepimus, nostræ linguæ studiosis tradimus. Ib. x. 11, Haec ut a Hebraeis nobis tradita sunt nostræ linguæ hominibus expressimus*.

by quotations from Scripture.¹ The formula, אל תקרי, is called by Jerome, "Non debemus legere,"² or "legi potest."³ He also interprets a word according to the meaning of its parts (נוטריקון = νοταρικόν), but he does not seem to have a special Latin term for it.⁴ Many more examples of Jerome's adherence to the wording of the Jewish Agada could be given, but what has been said exhibits sufficiently the undreamed of treasures for Jewish literature that lie concealed in Jerome's works. It is a pity that this treasure has not yet been fully opened up. Attempts, however, have been made. Besides Grätz's essay already noted, there are studies of Jerome's traditions by Rahmer. His writings on this subject are: *Die Hebraischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymos I.; Quaestiones in Genesin* (Breslau, 1861); *Die Hebraischen Traditionen in dem Bibelcommentar des Hieronymos* (Ben Chananya VII., 1864); *Die Hebraischen Traditionen des Hieronymos* (Frankel's *Monatsschrift*, 1866 and 1867). Also in Grätz's *Jubelschrift*, 1887.

While giving a due meed of recognition to Rahmer's efforts, I cannot refrain from remarking that he might

¹ In Is. viii. 23, Et hoc—inquiunt (Judaei)—Scriptura nunc dicit. *Quaest. Heb.* in Gen. xi. 28, Et hoc esse quod nunc dicitur. Cp. in Zach. viii. 16; in Sophon. ii. 13, et *passim*. Jerome is so familiar with this formula that he employs it in an Agada which he has been told by Jewish Christians (Is. viii. 23). In a verse from the New Testament (Matt. iii. 17) is another time noticed with this formula (in Chab. iii. 5)!

² In Zach. xiv. 20, מצלות, Quod quum a Hebraeo quaererem, quid significaret, ait *non debere nos legere mesuloth sed mesuloth* (var. maselloth) quod significat phaleras equorum et ornatum bellicum. . . . Similarly b. Pesach 50a (R. Eleazar): כל מצילות שתולנן לסום בין עיניו.

³ In Nahum iii. 8, Hebraeus qui me in Scripturis erudit, ita legi posse asseruit: Numquid melior es, quam No, Amon—et ait: Hebraice No dici Alexandriam, Amon autem, multitudinem, sive populus: et esse ordinem lectionis: Numquid melior es ab (*sic*) Alexandria populosa, sive populorum, quae habitat in fluminibus. . . . Therefore, המון, instead of אמון. Cp. Targum *ad loc.*

⁴ In Aggaeum i. 1, זרובבל, Apud Hebraeos ex tribus integris nomen ejus traditur esse compositum: Zo (זו) = iste; rob (רב) = magister sive major; babel (בבל) = Babylon: iste magister de Babylone. The same is found in the Midrash.

have done more justice to the theme. Rahmer does not compare other Church Fathers with Jerome; he even omits to place the parallel expressions side by side, nor does he seem to have any idea that several of these Agadas are already to be found in the so-called Hellenistic literature. The Jewish sources are also treated uncritically. The Jalkut and Midrash Rabba are not enough; the Babli, Jerushalmi, Sifre, Sifra, and Mechilta, finally the Targum, have also some connection with the subject. Here follow a few specimens.

14.—SPECIMENS OF JEROME'S MIDRASHIM.

1. *A Lost Midrash of R. Akiba.*

In Eccles. iv. 13: "Hebraeus meus, cujus saepe facio mentionem, cum Ecclesiasten mecum legeret, haec *Baracibam* (var. Baracchiban, Baracubivan = Rabbi Akiba), quem unum vel maxime admirantur, super praesenti loco tradidisse testatus est.

"Melior est interior homo, qui post quartum decimum pubertatis annum in nobis exoritur, exteriore homine, qui de matris alvo natus est qui nescit recedere a vitio et qui de domo victorum, de utero videlicet materno, ad hoc exivit, ut regnaret in vitiis. Quia etiam in potestate sua pauper effectus est, mala omnia perpetrando. Vidi eos, qui in priore homine vixerunt, et cum secundo homine postea versati sunt, eo videlicet, qui pro priore decessore generatus est: intellexique omnes in homine priore peccasse, antequam secundo nascente, duo homines fierent."

This Midrash is interesting, not so much for its contents as for its origin, having been composed by R. Akiba. It is a distorted version of an anonymous Midrash on Eccles. iv. 13, found in Aboth di R. Nathan, Version II., c. 4, p. 30, ed. Schechter, in the Midrash on Psalm ix. 5, in Koheleth Rabba iv. 13, and in Jalkut, Rashi, and other secondary sources. All Jerome's editors have unsuccessfully laboured to find some sense in this passage. It is corrupt simply

because Jerome did not understand the Agada which was told him. Of the Jewish sources, the earliest is the Midrash on the Psalms, being the only one composed in Aramaic. Let us compare this source with Jerome's version.

JEROME.

Melior est interior homo qui post
quartum decimum annum
in nobis exoritur exteriore homine.

Qui de matris alvo natus est.

Qui nescit recedere a vitio—qui
. . . ad hoc exivit, ut regnaret in
vitiis.

Qui pauper effectus est,
mala omnia perpetrando.

MIDRASH, Psalm ix. 5.

טוב ילך מסכן וחכם זה צר טוב
..... ולמה צווחין ליה, ילך דהוא
מזדווג לבר נש מן תלת עשר שנין
ולעילא.....זה יצר הרע
דהוא מזדווג לבר נש מן טליותיה
עד סיבותיה :

דכל איברים שמעין ליה
ולקד צוותין ליה מלך דכל איברים
שמצין ליה למה צוותין ליה
כסיל דהוא מכון ברייתא.....לארחן
בישן :

It is obvious that here we have the original Midrash ; but Jerome had not understood it, and makes the best sense he can of it. His further explanations of the passage should be read in conjunction with the Agada he quotes. Moreover, in the Midrash itself there reigns confusion, the cause of which is the attempt to bind together disconnected verses in one interpretation. The passages should be read in the original, and this view will become clear.

2. An Historical Tradition.

Quaestiones Hebraicae in Gen. xxii. 21 (בוז). Et ex hujus genere est Balaam ille divinus, ut Hebraei tradunt, qui in libro Job (xxxii. 2) dicitur Eliu, primum vir sanctus et propheta dei, postea per inobedientiam et desiderium munerum divini vocabulo nuncupatur (privatur ?) diciturque in eodem libro: *et iratus Eliu* de hujus videlicet radice descendens.

The popular legend that Job, Balaam and Jethro, lived at Pharaoh's court (Sanh. 106^a), brings Balaam into connection with Job. An apocryphal addendum of the Sep-

tuagint to the book of Job identifies Job with Jobab, son of Joktan. Various opinions, some similar to and others divergent from the foregoing, are found at the beginning of Bar-Hebraeus' Scholion to Job, printed in Bernstein's *Chrestomathia Syriaca* (Leipzig, 1832, p. 186). Ibn Ezra regards this legend as Karaitic, originating with יצחק הטקביל (Isaak ben Jasas) whom he ridicules. (See M. Sachs, *Beiträge zur Alterthumskunde II.*, 11 Note.) Jerome knows it also, but not as of Jewish origin; he rejects the apocrypha. But in his view that Elihu and Balaam are identical, he stands quite alone. This isolation sufficiently confirms our view that here, too, Jerome had made a mistake. He seems to have got hold of the Talmudical legend) Sanh. 105^b) that Balaam was descended from Boaz and Ruth; confused by the various traditions, he confounded Boaz (בעז) with Buz (בוז).

3. *An Halachic Midrash.*

In Ezek. xlv. 13, 14 : Traditionem accepimus Hebraeorum non lege praeceptam, sed magistrorum arbitrio molitam : qui plurimum, quadragesimam partem dabat sacerdotibus, qui minimum, sexagesimam, inter quadragesimam et sexagesimam licebat offerre quodcunque voluissent. Quod igitur in Pentateucho dubium relictum est, hic specialiter definitur propter sacerdotum avaritiam, ne amplius a populo exigant in primitiis deferendis, id est ut sexagesimam partem offerant eorum, quae gignuntur e terra.

Jerome makes a calculation which is either original or part of the tradition received by him, in order to show how this interpretation was derived from the verse in Ezechiel. The Talmudic computation of what constitutes עין יפה, עין רעה, and בינוני is also derived from that verse (J. Therumoth VI., 1, 42^d), but it is much less simple (compare Tosafoth, Kidduschim 41^d, s.v. תורם). Jerome's calculation seems to be the only correct one. Epiphanius also knew of this enactment. The Pharisees are said to have offered τριακοντάδες τε καὶ πεντηκοντάδες. Compare Hil-

genfeld, *Judenthum und Juden-christenthum* (Leipzig, 1886), p. 73.

4. *Seventy Noachide Precepts* (?).

In Zech. xi. 13, *Judaei istum locum malitiose interpretantes, triginta argenteos, triginta legis mandata commemorant quae facere jubeantur in lege et rursum triginta sex alia, quae prohibeantur in lege.* A remarkable Agada!

Grätz (*Monatsschrift*, 1854, p. 192) refers to T. B. *Chullin*, 92a, where the same verse is explained as enjoining thirty precepts on Noah's descendants. He writes as follows: Jerome has certainly misunderstood the Agada if he thinks it refers to enactments imposed upon the Jews, and speaks of thirty affirmative and thirty or thirty-six negative precepts." It appears to me that we ought first to understand the Agada in its Jewish form before we complain that Jerome recites it incorrectly. Is the reason quite obvious why T. B. *Chullin*, 92a, suddenly speaks of thirty Noachide commandments, whereas usually we know of seven such precepts? It is better to confess with M. Joel (Grätz, *Jubelschrift*, German portion, p. 174) that here we have an insoluble enigma. The riddle will, however, be solved if we take a totally different road to that followed by Grätz in his attempt to elucidate the passage. Among the 613 precepts of Judaism we find in various places that certain of them are grouped together. Thus, besides the division into affirmative and negative precepts, we also find the following classification in *Pesikta di R. Kahana*, p. 51b, Buber:

(Hosea iii. 2) ר' יוחנן פתח ואברה לי בחמשה עשר כסף בחמשה הרי חמשה עשר • וחומר שעורים הרי שלשים • ולתך שעורים הרי מ' • הרי ששים • אלו ששים מצות שכתב לנו משה בתורה ואמר ר' יוחנן בשם ר' שמעון בן יוח' שלוש פרשיות כתב לנו משה בתורה וכל אחת ואחת יש בה מששים מצות • ואלו הן פרשת פסחים ופרשת נזיקין ופרשת קדושים • ר' לוי בשם ר' שילא דכפר תמרמא אמר משבעים שבעים מצות • אמר ר' תנחומא ולא פליחי מן דעבד פרשת פסחים

שבעים כולל עמה פרשת תפלין • וכן מאן דעבד פרשת נזיקין
כולל עמה פרשת שמטה וכן מאן דעבד פרשת קדושים שבעים
כולל עמה פרשת ערוה :

Much ingenuity has been expended on the interpretation of the division here given, with but dubious results. Moses Tobias, of Hanau, believes it to mean that in *the whole Thora* there are sixty enactments with regard to Passover. This is certainly wrong, as the Midrash speaks of *פרשיות*, and not of the whole Thora. Heidenheim, in the *Pesach-agada*, enumerates sixty *sections* bearing upon Passover; but this view is opposed to the literal meaning of *מצות*. These opinions are justly discarded by M. Bloch, in the *Revue des Etudes Juives*, I., 201, who thinks the exact number is not to be pressed, as a round number was given. S. Buber, in his edition of the *Pesikta*, note 163, adopts the view that the Midrash speaks of the number of *verses* contained in the portions relating to Passover. He accordingly endeavours to show that the number, if referring to verses, would work out right. But a close examination reveals the fact that this is not the case. We must also avoid the fallacy of assuming that R. Simon ben Jochai had the same verse division as we have in our Bibles. It is therefore advisable to keep to the literal sense of the Midrash. The Agadists found sixty or seventy precepts, *מצות*, in the specified sections. Is this number correct? We reply, Yes, though according to our calculation a different number might possibly be obtained. It might be worth while giving in detail the calculation which yields the above number. We refrain from wearying our readers with a dry list of sixty or seventy precepts. However, let us examine ten precepts; if the calculation should prove correct in the smaller, it will probably also be so in the larger number. The *פרשת שמטה*, it is said, contains ten precepts. The reference here is clearly to Exod. xxiii. 10-19. There we find: (1) *שמטה*, (2) *שבת*, (3) *שם אלהים אחרים*, (4) *חג המצות*, (5) *חג הקציר*, (6) *חג האסיף*, (7) *חגיגה*, (8) *לא תזבח*, (9) *בשר בחלב*, (10) *בכורים*.

We willingly concede that the Agadist's meaning may not have been fully grasped in detail; but it will be seen that, on the whole, the calculation agrees. We have thus gained a sure result: all the precepts, affirmative and negative, are counted which are found anywhere in any section of the Thora.

We now return to Jerome. He says: "Triginta legis mandata quae facere jubeantur in lege." Those words sound like the Midrash: *מצות שכרב לנו משה בהרורה*..... Further: "Rursum triginta sex alia, quae prohibeantur in lege," which in Hebrew would be rendered *וכנגדן כרב לנו ל"ז מצות לא תעשה*. Accordingly we must not connect these traditions with the remark in *Chullin*, 92a, as Grätz has done, but with the passage quoted from the *Pesikta*. A group of precepts is discussed as a separate code. If it were permissible to suggest that Jerome was in error when he gave thirty-six as the number of precepts, when really it was only thirty, we could simply compare Jerome's tradition with R. Simon ben Jochai's view; thirty of these sixty precepts would be affirmative and thirty negative. The Scriptural sections in question contain both classes of commandments. The deduction from Zech. xi. 12, 13, would thus also be intelligible. The number thirty appears twice; the phrase *ואם לו* (ver. 12) would suggest *מצות לא תעשה*. But if the number thirty-six, and therefore a total of sixty-six is correct, the existence of three traditions may be assumed; one tradition found in that portion sixty precepts, the other seventy, and the third compromised the two and accepted sixty-six as the right number. The characteristic distinction, however, between affirmative and negative precepts shows that Jerome's account gives the original tradition, which is wanting in the Jewish sources, and proves its authenticity, though Grätz is unwilling to acknowledge it. The difficulty, that Jerome speaks of precepts imposed on the *Jews*, whilst the Talmud refers to *Noachide* laws, disappears when we remember that Jerome was thinking of another Midrash altogether. An

old Agada is given in the T. J. *Aboda Zara* II., 1, where כספ שלשים are explained to refer to thirty pious men on whom the moral order of the world depends. Diverse Agadas were attached to this verse. Amongst them one told by Jerome might also have been in circulation. As regards the thirty commandments given to the Noachides, we note, first, that this Agada is found in the following passages: B. *Chullin*, 92a; J. *Ab. Zara*, II., 1; *Leo Rabba*, c. 24; Midrash Psalm, II., 5; *Jalkut Exod.*, § 307; *Jalkut Hosea*, § 519. Between these different sources we give the preference to the Jerusalem Talmud, which is distinctly different from the rest. There the following statement is made in the name of רב: "מב בר הונא בשם רב: 'These are the thirty commandments which the sons of Noah will *one day* take upon themselves' (שערת ידין בני נח)." The golden Messianic age is here spoken of. The meaning of the Agada thus becomes clear. In olden times the Gentiles were only expected to keep seven commandments; but when the human race will have attained perfection, they will observe thirty. This distinction removes the discrepancy between this Agada and the ordinarily accepted canon of שבע מצוות בני נח. To what class do those thirty commandments belong? This is indicated by the T. Jerushalmi, in which רבלין וציצית are mentioned, and by a Midrash on Psalms which gives כוכה ולולב. In this Midrash we read: ננתקה את מוסרותינו אלו שבע מצוות שנצטוו בני נח ונשליכה ממנו עברותינו אלו שלשים מצוות שהן (Manuscript by Buber) קולעין בהן כגון כוכה ולולב שהן נקראו עבות.

The meaning of קולעין is not quite clear, but the sense is, "These are the thirty commandments which they break." (Cp. B. *Chullin*, 92b, above.) Some positive cause of complaint must have occasioned this remark. We do not think we shall be far out in conjecturing that this passage contained a veiled attack on certain heresies concerning Zizith and Tephillin, Succah and Lulab. Of the former definite accounts are extant; concerning the latter, Succoth and Lulab, only vague suggestions and hints have come down

to us. It was a long time before the use of the phylacteries became general. In T. B. *Berachot*, 47*b*, this is said to constitute the difference between *idiotai* (עם הארץ) and scholars (חבר). The latter alone wear Tephillin; the Am-Haaretz does not wish to have anything to do with Tephillin and Zizith.¹ The lament at the neglect of Tephillin is echoed in T. B. *Sabb.*, 130*a*,² and resounds in the Rabbinical literature of Spain throughout the Middle Ages.³ The use of Tephillin was often perverted by superstition, as the Greek name phylacteries already evidences. They were regarded as charms to ward off evils. The Mishna (*Erubim* x. 1) complains that the Tephillin are sometimes used for superstitious and not religious purposes; and we often encounter the expression קמיע = charm, talisman, in connection with Tephillin.⁴ Those who did observe the precept seem also to have endowed them with a magical power.⁵ According to an old Bòraitha, the women shared this superstition;⁶ even Christian ladies, in Jerome's times, made use of Tephillin as charms, as already noticed. So much about Zizith and Tephillin. With Succoth and Lulab something similar must have happened. The difference between the Pharisees and Sadducees with regard to the *Ritual* of the Feast of Tabernacles is known to history. This antagonism may have been revived. The Agada, therefore, which rele-

¹ Cp. B. *Sota*, 22*a*; B. *Gitt.* 61*a*; B. *Pesach*, 49*b*, and Rosenthal, *Four Apocryphal Books*, p. 26.

² וכל מצוה שלא מסרו ישראל עזמן עליה כגון תפלין עדין היא מרופה בידם. Cp. *Tosaphoth*.

³ S. T. J. Reifman, in *Beth-Talmud* II. (1881), p. 52.

⁴ Especially in *Masecheth Tephillin*. Kirchbein, *Septem Libri Talmudici*, p. 19.

⁵ B. *Erub*, 96*b*, אמר רבא וכי אדם טורח לעשות תפלין כמין קמיע. What Raba in Babylon regarded as improbable might have been the case in Palestine.

⁶ B. *Berachoth*, 30*b*, מעשה באישה אחת שהיתה ב' שאח לחבר והיתה, קומעת תפלין על ידו where the expression קומעת must be noticed. Possibly in the Midrash on the Psalm, which we have quoted, we should read קולעין instead of קומעין, "They are superstitious about it."

gates the universal observance of Tephillin, Zizith, Succoth, and Lulab to the *Messianic times* started from the indisputable fact that that consummation had, at all events, not yet been reached. "The Noachides" designates the uncultured populace. It is to be regretted that those commandments have not been written down, so that we are unable to discover the historical background of this remarkable Agada; however, we venture to think that, if not altogether, we have at least partly discovered it. It is to be hoped that an investigator will soon arise who will treat the immense field of the Agada according to the requirements of historical criticism.

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